



Department of Public Health

February 3, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Department Addresses Measles Vaccination Concerns

No cases of measles in El Paso in more than 20 years

El Paso, Texas – The City of El Paso Department of Public Health continues to monitor the current measles outbreak now affecting 14 states across the country. So far no cases have been reported here locally. The last case of measles in El Paso was seen in 1993. Officials attribute the lack of cases to the fact that a significant majority of the population in El Paso are vaccinated against the disease.

The latest data available shows that El Paso children up to the age of 24 months have a 92.2 percent vaccination rate against measles. The local vaccination rate for those 19 to 35 months is 93.7 percent. This compares to 92.7 percent in the state and 91.9 nationally.

"We must commend the parents in El Paso for their diligence in making sure their children are protected from disease," said Robert Resendes, Public Health Director. "It is most likely because of them, their doctors, nurses and our staff in the immunization program that we have remained outside the scope of the current outbreak."

Resendes points out that "herd immunity" is a form of group protection that occurs when a large majority of the population is vaccinated and therefore makes it difficult for a disease to spread. There are simply too few susceptible people left to infect. This can help stop the spread of disease and can be critical for those who, for whatever reason, cannot be vaccinated. Children who are too young to be vaccinated, people with immune system problems, and those who are too ill to receive vaccines are those who benefit most from this type of community immunity.

The percentage of students (Kinder-12th grade) in El Paso County with a conscientious exemption from state-mandated vaccines remains extremely low. The last several years are shown below:

2010-2011: 0.34%

2011-2012: 0.15%

2012-2013: 0.14%

2013-2014: 0.22%

(-MORE-)



Department of Public Health
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The measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine is given to children at 12 months and 4 years of age. The Department of Public Health's Immunization program offers the vaccine to children who are covered by Medicaid (ALL Texas Medicaid Plans accepted) and to children who do not have health insurance, or who are underinsured and meet eligibility requirements. The cost is \$10 or less based on their ability to pay. An appointment to receive the vaccine is available by calling (915) 212-6555. The clinics are located at:

**Henderson
721 S. Mesa**

**Tigua
7862 San Jose**

**Ysleta
110 Candelaria**

**Westside
5195 Mace**

The mission of the Department of Public Health is to provide research and evaluation, prevention, intervention, and mobilization services to the people of El Paso so they can be healthy, productive, safe and secure. For more information on the programs and services offered by the Department of Public Health, visit EPHealth.com or dial 2-1-1.

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